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## PORNOGRAPHY AND ITS EFFECTS:

### A Survey of Recent Literature

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## I DEFINITIONS OF PORNOGRAPHY

Pornography is a subject of tremendous complexity. Evidence of its complexity and controversial nature is seen in the divergence of opinions expressed in the numerous attempts to define it, as well as in the arguments both pro and con which examine the issue of censorship.

### i) Canadian Criminal Code

Pornography is described in the Canadian Criminal Code, Section 159, as an offence of corrupting morals and is synonymous with obscenity. This section of the Code is detailed and covers a range of areas such as materials portraying obscene material, transactions which involve obscene materials, the mailing of obscene material, etc. The definition currently provides that the undue exploitation of crime, horror, cruelty or violence is obscene only when depicted in conjunction with sex. If, however, it can be established that the material has served the public good, a conviction under Section 159 will not result. There is also a provision which allows the court to consider the artistic merit and any other socially redeeming qualities of potentially obscene material.

### ii) Bill C-21

In the last few months, the Federal Parliament has focussed increasing attention on the laws which concern pornography. A Parliamentary Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs composed of 35 members, including two women, examined the issue of pornography, and in March 1978, they presented a Report on Pornography to Parliament. The committee premised their recommendations with the comment that "pornography promotes values and behaviour which are unacceptable in a society committed to egalitarian, consensual, mutual and non-violent human relationships." (Upstream, May/78: 7)

On May 1, 1978, the Minister of Justice, Ron Basford, introduced Bill C-21 which proposed extensive revisions to the Canadian Criminal Code in several areas, including the area of pornography. Clause 18 of Bill C-21 would have expanded the interpretation of obscenity to include, besides the original definition of the undue exploitation of violence, new factors including the undue exploitation of crime, horror or cruelty. As well, the undue depiction of a totally or partially nude child engaged in sex acts and the undue display of a child's body in a sexually suggestive manner would also be considered obscene. The Bill also included a new category, described as the "undue degradation of the human person". However, it is



unclear how "undue degradation" will be interpreted. (Rioux, 1978: 7)  
With the new Conservative Government in power, any move to amend the Code will have to start again from the beginning. (Globe and Mail, July 21/79)

iii) Feminist Perspectives

Many feminists, such as Lorene Clark, a professor of philosophy and criminology at the University of Toronto, advocate a reconceptualization of obscenity and pornography. They point out that sexual contact between men and women for pleasure or anything other than procreation, has never been endorsed within the Greco-Judeo-Christian tradition. Thus, all material which "emphasized the pleasurable, sensuous aspects of sexuality has been considered pornographic". (Clark, 1978: 1) But, feminists argue that "explicit sex is not inherently demeaning. It is only when sex is portrayed in a way that promotes the sexual objectification of women or depicts women in violent and/or sado-masochistic sex, that we find it offensive. Most pornography dwells on aspects of human sexuality which involves domination and control, and increasingly relies on violence to supply its titillation". (Friedman, 1976: 28)

Arguments for the reform of obscenity laws have stressed that positive, non-procreational aspects of human sexuality are, in fact, normal and healthy as opposed to abnormal and corrupt. Most contemporary feminist perspectives do not condemn the distribution, sale, or manufacture of materials which stress these positive aspects of sexuality. Instead, they wish "to shift the focus from seeing explicitly sexual material as pornographic because it deals with sex, to seeing material as pornographic because it involves the use or threat of violence as a means of achieving sexual gratification or because it involves an inappropriate object of sexual gratification". (Clark, 1978: 3)

On March 7, 1978, Lorene Clark and Debra Lewis of the Vancouver Status of Women, spoke before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, with the aim of providing a conceptual framework for legislators which would draw them away from seeing explicit sexual material as obscene. Clark advocated a reconceptualization of obscenity as 'material involving the use or threat of violence as the means of achieving sexual gratification or (material involving) an inappropriate object of sexual gratification'. One might argue that while Clark's objective, to see degradation as the sole criterion for obscenity, was a valid one, her efforts to do this failed because degradation was not made the only criterion for determining pornography, but was added to a series of criteria which defined pornography.

## II EROTICISM VS PORNOGRAPHY

Feminists, such as Gloria Steinem, argue that "erotica" and "pornography" are very different concepts. However, they are often confused as similar phenomena by the public and Legislature. It is argued that as a result of this confusion, erotica, like pornography, is classified as legally "obscene". The concepts are similar, in that in both cases, sexuality for pleasure is separated from sexuality for procreation; therefore, both concepts can be used to carry a personal message. However, erotica differs from pornography in terms of the message which it articulates.

Steinem defines erotic as "a mutually pleasurable, sexual expression between people who have enough power to be there by positive choice". Pornography's message, however, "is violence, dominance and conquest. It is sex being used to reinforce some inequality, or to create one, or to tell us the lie that pain and humiliation...are really the same as pleasure.... Perhaps, one could simply say that erotica is about sexuality, but pornography is about power and sex-as-weapon." (Steinem, 1978: 56)

Steinem fears that the differences between eroticism and pornography will not be clarified easily in either the Legislature or in people's minds because there is a growing conservatism and "fear of change which is increasing both the indiscriminate repression of all non-procreative sex in the religious and 'conservative' male world, and pornographic vengeance against women's sexuality in the secular world of 'liberal' or 'radical' men." (Steinem, 1978: 75)

## III POPULAR CULTURE AND PORNOGRAPHY

Many sociologists warn that whatever the definition of pornography, it is currently part of the popular culture. Consequently, there is a fine line between what is considered art, what is considered entertainment, and what is considered pornographic, especially because of the broad legal definition of pornography. In order to illustrate more clearly the intricacies and complexity of determining the differences between art, entertainment, and pornography, it is perhaps worthwhile to examine current trends which deal with this issue.

### i) Book-banning

One of the major areas of discussion which concern the question of art as opposed to pornography, deals with recent book-banning of allegedly pornographic books by fundamentalist groups, such as Renaissance International.



This particular movement was founded by evangelist, Rev. Ken Campbell, in March 1974 in the Halton region of Southern Ontario. Currently, it has provincial organizations and local school district chapters in all but three provinces; PEI, Quebec and Nova Scotia, which it expects to organize shortly. The objectives of Renaissance have been endorsed by the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada which claims 2 million adherents. As well, an editorial in The Catholic Register, noted that the Catholic electorate also supported Renaissance and its aims. (Franklin: 1979)

Renaissance International and other groups attempt to ban certain books from schools and public libraries because they believe that they contain pornographic and obscene passages. However, many of these condemned books include not only "Canadian classics", but books which comprise great English and American literature, as well. For example, Renaissance has defined as obscene, books such as Margaret Laurence's, The Diviners, because of the "sex parts", Marian Engel's, Bear, because the heroine makes love to a bear (bestiality), John Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men because of the obscene language.

This condemnation of "literature" is not restricted to the Renaissance organization. A similar situation occurred in Quebec in December 1978, when a coalition of the Knights of Columbus, the Young Canadians for a Christian Civilization and the Quebec Association of Catholic Parents campaigned to have the book version of a controversial play by Denise Boucher, "Les Fees ont soif", ("The Fairies are Thirsty") banned as heretical and obscene. (The main protagonists are a whore, a housewife and the Virgin Mary).

Many of those who defend the books as Canadian classics and the play as legitimate art, claim that these works are not pornographic. They argue that the "book-banners" often rely on isolated passages which may appear "pornographic" if placed out of context. They say that if these "snippets" are placed in the context of the writer's or artist's purpose, the work itself cannot be perceived as obscene.

Some feminists who defend these works have adopted a different approach. They argue that authors like Engel, Laurence and Boucher are performing the valuable function of exploring the subject of eroticism and violence, by making them central themes in their creativity. They believe that this exploration of eroticism from a feminist viewpoint is of crucial importance to women. (Kinesis, Oct/78)

Feminists point out that some women, like men, will accept the "excellent opportunities throughout mass media to serve as collaborators producing vile sexist propaganda", such as the female photographer who photographed the April 1976 cover of Playboy Magazine which featured a picture suggesting incest and paedophilia. (Nothern Woman Journal)

ii) Entertainment: Topless Waitresses

A similar problem is that of determining what is obscene or pornographic as opposed to entertainment. An excellent example, is the recent labelling of topless waitresses as obscene by Consumer and Commercial Relations Minister, Frank Drea. To comply with the provincially-inspired Metro By-Law, which prevents waitresses from appearing topless, the women wore tiny vests open to the navel or translucent T-shirts, which they removed when they danced on stage. Simultaneously, for example, at the Colonial Tavern on Yonge Street, pornographic movies were shown "featuring couples competing in a round-the-clock marathon of undressing, bumping and grinding". (Toronto Life, April, 1979)

Many feminists might applaud Drea's action in that they might claim that the appearance of topless waitresses, like play-boy pin-ups, encourage a negative and degrading perception of women. However, they might be hard-pressed to differentiate between the degree of degradation which makes topless waitresses obscene and those with transparent T-shirts, acceptable. It would seem that the dividing line between the exploitation of women, and entertainment by women is not clearly defined in the minds of politicians or the public.

Today, pornography is increasingly a part of the popular culture. As its popularity has increased, it has become specialized. There is a form of pornography which is directed specifically to men, such as Playboy Magazine, and a pornography which is directed towards women, such as Cosmopolitan Magazine; the pornography of teenagers is concentrated in the lyrics of popular music; and the pornography of a minority, sexually deviant subgroup is concentrated in specialized magazines which cater to a variety of tastes. All of these types are easily available in any city in North America.



#### IV THEORIES AS TO THE EFFECT OF PORNOGRAPHY ON SOCIETY

Generally, traditional theorists in sociology and psychology have tended to perceive pornography as a useful phenomenon in society. They have not believed it to be particularly damaging to society or dangerous to individuals, and to a greater or lesser extent, they have "normalized" its existence; that is, they have described it as a normal aspect of personal and social growth, or as a necessary ingredient for social equilibrium.

##### i) Psycho-analytic Theory

Until the last decade, psychoanalytic theory dominated thought about pornography and sado-masochism. Freud interpreted pornography as a response to frustration. He based this premise on the belief that the sexual drive is a major biological drive which must be constrained if human beings are to co-exist in society. Pornography is the wish fulfillment fantasies of people who sublimate their sexual desires and later transform them into pornographic art. Thus, pornography provides the personality with a harmless escape for destructive sexual drives. (McCormack, 1978b)

Freud believed that sado-masochism differs from pornography in that one consents to being beaten or spanked because one feels that one deserves the treatment. Freud argued that sadism and masochism are separate elements of human nature, but are always found together in the individual. They reflect the potential bisexual nature of each individual, in that sadism or aggression represents the male orientation, and masochism or passivity reflect the female orientation. "Under normal circumstances men are not sadistic brutes and women are not suffering martyrs, but they are predisposed in these directions, and if through events in their early lives they move toward the extremes, a pathological condition exists. (McCormack, 1978b: 17)

##### ii) Sociological Theory

Sociological interpretations of pornography tend to focus on institutions and social integration. (McCormack, 1978B: 19) Interest in pornography is perceived as part of a normal growing up experience, instead of a symptom of potential pathology. (McCormack, 1978b: 20). For example, according to sociologist, Ned Polsky, people's sexual needs, especially men's sexual needs, cannot be accommodated within the socially sanctioned marriage framework. Consequently, pornography and prostitution provide a temporary escape from the strains imposed by the limitations of marriage. This theoretical approach partially normalizes pornography, because the pornographer and his clients are no longer perceived as serving deviant needs, but are perceived to be fulfilling important social roles.



iii) Humanistic Psychology

In humanistic psychology, however, pornography becomes fully normalized. This theoretical tradition begins with the assumption that sex, like intelligence, is a learned form of behaviour as opposed to instinctual, innate behaviour. Sexual development does not stop in youth, but continues throughout life. Pornography may "drift" into a person's life at any time. Interest in pornography may be either positive or negative and like all sexual experiences, sado-masochism may be a means of acquiring insight and may result in personal growth.

iv) Pornography as a mode of thought

Sociologist, Thelma McCormack, claims that modern pornography must be understood in terms of the modern social structure. Pornography is presented as a specific mode of thought which is the result of modern society, and in particular, science and technology. She notes that many scientific models are used in an attempt to link the social sciences with the humanities. Although most models are usually based on value assumptions, an increasing number, called perverse models, are characterized by the absence of certain value assumptions. She suggests that pornography is a sub-species of a larger category of perverse models which reject or drop certain value commitments. For example, pornography affirms sexuality without procreation and it promotes pleasure without duty.

Sexuality and pornography are also examined in terms of value commitments by Judith Finlayson who criticizes a female sexuality study published by Penthouse Forum Magazine. She first emphasizes that the study itself is based on a lack of value assumptions. The women in the study "seem much more interested in displaying their sexuality than in applying any effort to understanding what it is all about". The content of the study, she suggests, does not focus on "normal" heterosexual sex, but the American Psychiatric Association's list of sexual deviations such as fetishism, exhibitionism, voyeurism, sadism, masochism, paedophilia, bestiality, etc.

She quotes from the study, comments by a female streaker who claimed that "streaking was a mass turn-on...I enjoyed torturing men." She notes that the Penthouse study claimed that sado-masochistic sex represented "liberated sex", but personally "fails to see the liberation in being spanked, whipped or chained to a bed." She concludes that the major point made by the study is not that sex is a pleasurable end in itself, but that it serves "as a vehicle for expressing deep psychological malfunctioning." Like McCormack,

Finlayson argues that sexual expression, especially of a pornographic nature, is increasingly reflective of a lack of, and even a rejection of value commitments which normal sexuality has traditionally adopted. (Globe and Mail, June 30, 1979).

#### V VIOLENCE IN PORNOGRAPHY: ITS CHANGING CONTENT

Historically, most pornography has not been sado-masochistic in nature; instead, it has been closer in spirit to the descriptive and suggestive works of Casanova, as opposed to the sado-masochistic novels of de Sade. (McCormack, 1978b: 7). In the past, sado-masochistic material has concentrated on depictions which describe the whipping or humiliation of men, not women or children. Recently, however, feminists have noted a growing trend toward sado-masochism in films and in advertising, in which women, not men, are beaten and humiliated. Furthermore, sado-masochism is no longer being restricted to the minority deviant sub-group, but is beginning to pervade all pornographic literature.

Barry Spinner and Neal Malamuth, professors at UCLA, recently did a content analysis on 5 years of pictures and cartoons in Playboy and Penthouse and found that the amount of sexual violence in these magazines had increased each year. (Psychology Today, Nov/78: 111)

Andrea Dworkin, author of Woman-Hating, declared at the Feminist Conference on Pornography held in San Francisco in November 1978, "All over this country a new campaign of terrorism and villification is being waged against us. Fascist propaganda celebrating sexual violence against women is sweeping this land. Fascist propaganda celebrating the sexual degradation of women is inundating cities, college campuses, small towns. Pornography is the propaganda of sexual terrorism." (Fulford, 1979: 14)

The most extreme and explicit forms of violent sado-masochistic pornography are oriented toward the members of the deviant sub-group. One of the worst types of offenders is the "Snuff" film genre. Its name is derived from a term used by Charles Manson who reportedly filmed murders in the late 1960's in California. (O'Hara, 1979: 7) Snuff films are produced in South America and made available to select audiences at \$1500 for 8 reels. The magazine, Kinesis, May 1977, reported that "At one private showing in New York City, each viewer paid \$200 to see what he believed was a record of real horror on a surprised woman's face as she realized the play-acting had turned into a nightmare reality in which the knife attack upon her by a male sexual partner was only too real." (O'Hara, 1979: 7)



"Kiddie" pornography publications are also becoming increasingly popular. They depict the participation of children in sexually explicit acts either alone, with other children, with adults, with animals or objects. (Upstream, May 1978) Two examples, Naked Kids and Nudist Moppets are presently sold in Toronto. (Globe and Mail, May/77)

The examples of violent pornography which are of most concern to feminists, are those which are currently being depicted in popular magazines, on record covers, and even in store advertisements. While the existence of pornography, and even violent "porn" for a small deviant sub-culture is accepted by many women as inevitable, the new and growing pervasiveness of pornographic violence against women has become so widespread that it has acquired a queer kind of chic, kinky appeal". (Fulford. 1979: 14). For example, a window display by a shop in Toronto's new Eaton's Centre, showed "two women dressed in tough looking black outfits including cabaret black net stockings... In their hands they held a rope-chain device which engulfed a huge white sheet. Under this sheet were two other female mannequins who were presumably nude - only their legs were revealed." (McCormack, 1978b: 8). The cover of a recent Vogue Magazine depicted a woman wearing a harness commonly used in sado-masochistic sex. As well, several covers of records such as a Rolling Stones album cover entitled "I'm Black and Blue and I love it" which depicted a woman who was beaten black and blue, insinuated that she enjoyed her predicament.

## VI EXPLANATIONS FOR THE TREND TOWARDS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

### i) Economic

The reasons for this new trend of violence against women are not clear. One current hypothesis suggests that as a commercial product, various types of pornography compete with not only other media for a share of the market, but also among themselves for audiences. Consequently, pornography entrepreneurs must deliver increasingly bizarre products to maintain their share of the market. Judith Reisman, a doctoral candidate at Case Western Reserve University, is currently doing research on the influence of sexual media on feminine identity. Her research indicates that hardcore pornography is like all marketed products in that it needs to be periodically "improved" to stimulate flagging sales. Saturation with straight-forward female sexual stimulus leads to the need for, and acceptance of child molestation, incest, and sexual violence. She claims that the hardcore pornography media is presently involved with paedophilia, but is moving toward incest and the final taboo, child sadism. (Northern Woman Journal, August/78).

ii) Backlash against women

A second theory commonly offered by feminists is that pornography, especially blatant misogyny, is a manifestation of a backlash against the women's movement. For example, Reisman's research indicates that newsstand pornography issues have increased from zero in 1953, to well over 30 in the last 5 years. She claims that it is not coincidental that Playboy Magazine began after World War II when women began moving into the mainstream of society; nor that the pornography industry blossomed after the publication of Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique. (Northern Woman Journal, August/78)

Similarly, feminists, Robin Morgan and Gloria Steinem, link violent pornography with a backlash against feminism. Morgan claims that "Brutality Chic" itself can be seen as a backlash, exerting a chilling effect on our political dissent as feminists, our disconcerting redefinitions of sexuality, our tests on contraception and midwifery--and our support of accurate sex-education and of genuine erotic art or literature." (Morgan, 1978: 78-79)

Steinem links "this gross condemnation of all sexuality" (both erotic and pornographic) with the "current backlash against women's progress. Out of the fear that the whole patriarchal structure might be upset if women really had the autonomous power to decide our reproductive futures.... right-wing groups are not only denouncing pro-choice abortion literature as 'pornographic', but are trying to stop the sending of all contraceptive information through the mails by invoking obscenity laws." (Steinem, 1978: 53)

iii) Pornography as a mirror of increasing violence in society

Another interpretation suggests that pornography mirrors an increasing portrayal of violence in society by the media. Sadistic atrocities in Vietnam are portrayed first in T.V. news and later are illustrated in painting, photography, and so on. (McCormack, Pornography, Models and Social Structure: 10)

iv) Effect of media technology

Thelma McCormack suggests that the unique characteristic of contemporary pornography, "its amoral realism - the use of real voices on tapes, nightclub entertainment with live sex shows, videotapes or photographs of children engaging in sexual intercourse with adults" is not explained by the above theories. (McCormack, 1978b: 11) She claims that it represents a new and unique voyeuristic aesthetic made possible by media technology. It is "a



logical conclusion of a voyeuristic relationship between media producers and audiences which is part of daily T.V. and ...cinema verite documentaries... this new aesthetic is anti-aesthetic...it sees in aesthetic distancing only alienation... and in an attempt to overcome that alienation it substitutes something else....specifically, the sensuality of pornography."  
(McCormack, 1978b: 11)

In view of this new trend toward sado-masochistic violence against women in pornography, feminists are becoming increasingly suspicious of traditional theorists whose research indicates that pornography is a harmless, if distasteful phenomenon in society. Recently, criticism has focussed on the inconsistency of studies on pornography and violence. McCormack examined this inconsistency by focussing on three studies: The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, (1969); The Commission on Obscenity and Pornography (1970); and the Surgeon-General's Report on Television and Social Behaviour (1972). She comments that the commissions on violence, as well as the LaMarsh Commission in 1977, accepted the view that media violence leads to anti-social behaviour and that censorship was necessary.  
(McCormack, 1978a: 1). In contrast, the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography concludes that the effects of pornography are innocuous, and censorship is therefore, unnecessary.

McCormack suggests that possibly the research on both violence and pornography are characterized by sexist biases in the way the problems are conceptualized and in their research design. (McCormack, 1978a: 1)

## VII INFLUENCE OF "SEXUAL MEDIA" ON FEMALE IDENTITY

The growing interest in the potential violent effect of pornography has resulted in many new questions and concerns. Two of the major issues are whether all pornography causes violence against women and what if anything should be censored. On the one hand, the censorship issue is linked with a growing conservatism in society and fundamentalist movements which ban as pornographic, novels classified by the intellectual establishment as Canadian classics, such as Margaret Laurence's, The Diviners, and Marian Engel's, Bear. On the other hand, the potential violent aspect of pornography is linked to the growing belief that all pornography degrades women and casts them in a light which has a negative effect on female identity.

Judith Reisman has focussed on the influence of the "sexual media" on female identity. She placed what she calls the "Playboy genre" in a systems analysis theoretical perspective. This approach allows her to view these

magazines not as a collection of disjointed "girlie magazines", but as an integrated whole. She concludes that Playboy represents the foundation for the "pornography language conditioning process"; that is, it has successfully laid the groundwork for "the whole media sex-ploitation movement which we are in the midst of now." (Northern Woman Journal, August/78)

She claims that "historically male culture has devised techniques to deflect women from their goals and to shut women out of the mainstream society.... these magazines are peddling the dehumanization of women and, as a result of cultural conditioning and pressures, women are buying the images."

(Northern Woman Journal, August/78) Consequently, she believes that pornography is not only affecting the way in which men perceive women, but it is also affecting the way in which women perceive themselves.

Pornography is not only creating a negative image of women, it is also using women to undermine the protected status of children. Reisman relates the increased sexual abuse of adolescents in the United States and the recent sharp increase in oral venereal disease among children under 5 years, to the breakdown of sexual taboos by pornographic magazines, films and so on. She claims that from a broad social perspective, the Playboy genre is the strongest educator in this breakdown of taboos.

She describes the breakdown of taboos as a subtle, but effective process. While women are accepted victims of male sexual violence, the acceptance of child molestation and incest is a newer phenomenon and initially requires the blurring of age distinctions between mature women, adolescents and children in photographs. Initial techniques include images of women imitating girls, or the placing of women in child-like settings using toys and dolls. Other more "advanced" techniques use cartoons which associate children with sex, for example, Hustler Magazine's, "Chester the Molester", who molests a different child every month.

Reisman argues that this begins a process which allows for real sexual abuse of children. It puts the legal system under pressure to change laws so that younger children are legally available. She gives Sweden as an example of a country where this process is presently occurring. Recently, Sweden, which has very liberal pornography laws lowered the age of consent to 15 years of age. Furthermore, a special government committee has proposed that it be lowered still further to 14 years of age and that the prohibition against incest be abolished. Reisman warns that "this would make small girls legal adults, and it would also leave them open to sexual exploitation without any legal reprisals. Such legal change is hardly brought about by the power lobby of little girls." (Northern Woman Journal, August/78) In Denmark,



despite the recent reports which indicate that pornography is a factor in decreasing violence in society, Reisman suggests that there is "an appalling merchandise of kidnapped children bought from destitute relatives in developing countries" who are used in pornographic films. Violent pornography against women is only part of a general trend which "has moved from the '38-D' fantasy of the male in the 1950's towards paedophilia or child molestation". (Northern Woman Journal, August 1979)

#### VIII VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

In a similar way, women are increasingly beginning to suspect that there is a causal relationship between violent pornography and violence against women. Author and feminist, Robin Morgan, argues that the quantities of pornography found by police in the apartment of mass murderer David Berkowitz and in Charles Manson's commune, may be an indication of a connection between pornography and violence. (Morgan 1978: 54) Morgan also claims that there is growing evidence that the latest (1970) Presidential Commission on Obscenity and Pornography suppressed information on causal links between pornography and violence. Both the Hill-Link Minority Report and Dr. Victor Cline's testimony before the Commission which analyzed its methodology, discuss the suppression of findings. (Morgan, 1978: 55)

Reverend Brad Massman of Toronto testified before the House of Commons Justice Committee that prostitutes are also being affected by the new trend in sado-masochistic pornography. Massman who is the co-chairman of an inter-denominational committee against pornography and obscenity, said "hookers have become victims of clients, who instead of wanting what is generally regarded as normal sex, now wanted to burn, torture and beat their pick-ups". (Maclean's Magazine, 1978: 20)

Feminist organizations are being formed to examine this area. The Media plank in the National Plan of Action formed in Houston urged women to "join the campaign to de-emphasize the exploitation of female bodies and the use of violence against women in the mass media". (Ms Magazine, November/78: 78) Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media, a non-profit feminist organization of 500 women located in San Francisco, is examining the issue of violence in pornography. Women for the Abolition of Pornography, located in New York, is encouraging public discussion and political action on this issue. They have recently compiled a statement of principles which is available to the public.

An organization called Women Against Violence Against Women located throughout the United States and in Toronto, believes that pornography is violence against women. They point to sado-masochistic violence in the media as a prime perpetrator of violence, and they focus attention on specific items such as record covers like the one shown on a billboard for a Rolling Stones album entitled "Black and Blue". It portrayed a smiling woman bound and beaten accompanied by the words, "I'm black and blue from Rolling Stones and I love it." (New York Times, January 1/77)

The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre in its newsletter, (Vol. III, Issue 2) links rape and pornography, claiming that the motive force operational in both is the desire to control, dominate and humiliate. In both situations women are viewed as anonymous and dehumanized objects. Pornography reinforces the objectification of women which perpetuates this viewpoint. The cumulative effect of sado-masochism and violent sexuality is to encourage the victimization of women and a casual attitude toward violence. "While no direct causal relationship between pornography and the victimization of women has been established, it must be conceded that the casual attitude of the media toward such violence is a contributing factor in the rise of rape in specific and other violent crimes in general." (Rape Crisis Centre Newsletter: 14)

Feminists suggest that the frequent repetition of themes of domination and violence against women by the media, reinforce attitudes which encourage men to rape and commit acts of violence. "While movies like Clockwork Orange or Snuff may not in and of themselves influence any one to commit rape or murder, such pro-violence, anti-woman programming promotes the development of a society which is casual about violent acts, especially against women." (Friedman, 1978: 26)

While there is little scientific evidence that there is a causal relationship between violent pornography and violence against women, increasingly the onus of proof is being placed on those who believe that there is no relationship. Robert Fulford suggests that "scientific" proof is impossible because no experiment with believable controls is possible. (Fulford, 1979: 18) He claims that "We don't need scientific research to tell us that pornography has become one of the poisons of our civilization. Anyone with a sense of human dignity must be appalled by the fact that it finds so ready a market - and, despite all predictions, continues to find that market years after first being widely introduced." (Fulford, 1979: 18)



Although it is difficult to prove an overall cause and effect relationship between media violence and real violence, some feminists argue that there are individual incidents which show a direct link. One example they give from a list of incidences is a broomstick rape which was executed by a lesbian on television, but performed by a man in real-life. Some feminists claim that "it is hard to believe that these are simply bizarre coincidences and not an indication of the media's ability to influence behaviour." (Friedman, 1976: 26)

Recently, laboratory experiments have been conducted by two UCLA professors, Seymour Fesbach and Neal Malamuth, (Psychology Today, November 1978) who have attempted to establish a causal relationship between pornography and violence. Their studies focus on the possible impact of sado-masochistic pornography. In a laboratory experiment, two groups composed of men and women read one of two versions of a sado-masochistic story from Penthouse. (One version was violent, the other was non-violent). They then read a story about rape in which pain cues were moderate and no sexual excitement was expressed by the female during the rape. The researchers discovered that sexual responses which are usually inhibited because of the pain expressed by the victims of a rape were not inhibited when the students were exposed to sado-masochistic stories. Males were particularly affected by the sado-masochistic material. Those who were exposed to the violent material felt greater sexual excitement, the greater their perception of the victim's pain, whereas males who were exposed to non-violent material felt less sexual excitement the greater their perception of the victim's pain. The researchers also found evidence that the men were identifying with the rapist and considered rape as conceivably within their own range of behaviour. (Fesbach and Malamuth, 1978)

Susan Brownmiller who wrote a history of rape entitled, Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape, feels that historical evidence indicates that pornography encourages violence against women. Her history reveals that the typical rape story in pornographic books and magazines portrays women as sexually aroused during the rape. Consequently, pornography perpetuates the myth that women like to be victims, that they are easy targets and as victims they are sexually exciting and entertaining.

Fesbach and Malamuth's research which indicates that the negative inhibitions of men toward rape disappear when confronted with the fantasy of a woman becoming excited as a result of sexual assault, appears to be particularly relevant in view of Brownmiller's findings about the typical rape story. (Fesbach and Malamuth, 1978: 114)

This research contradicts the evidence offered by criminologists in Denmark and Sweden where pornography of all types is freely available. These countries have implemented laws which in effect, completely normalize pornography. A recently published report, Pornography in Denmark: A Review, by a Danish criminologist at the University of Copenhagen's Institute of Criminal Science, declared that easy access to pornography decreases the incidence of most crimes (Globe and Mail, March 9/78). The findings seem to support a cathartic perspective first postulated by Freud. It is based on the belief that by providing vicarious experiences, pornography provides harmless outlets for the destructive tendencies of human beings. The study notes that the wave of pornography that swept through the country in the early 1960's and 1970's is receding. It suggests that the freely available pornography has brought a decrease in all sex crimes but rape; however, it emphasizes that although rape has increased, it has increased only fractionally in terms of rising rates of crime, such as robbery and vandalism. (Globe and Mail, March 9/78)

In 1973, a study which examined sex crimes committed between 1959 and 1969 in Denmark, reported similar findings in regard to child molestation. The study reported that child molestation had fallen by 56% in Copenhagen in 1965, the same year that the first hardcore pornographic magazine had become available in Denmark. (It sold over 2 million copies). The paper stated that "the high availability of hardcore pornography in Denmark was probably the very direct cause of a considerable decrease in at least one type of serious sex offense, namely child molestation." The paper concludes that this occurred because potential offenders found sexual satisfaction through pornography. (Globe and Mail, March 9/78)

Pornographic material was also made available in Italy for a short period of time with mixed reactions from the public, feminists and sociologists. This was the result of a 1976 court ruling which authorized private local stations to compete with two conservative national networks operated by the state broadcasting monopoly called Radiotelevisione Italiana (R.A.I.).

The new stations mushroomed from 0 in 1976 to 385 by 1978. They attracted 20 to 40% of Italy's prime time viewers away from the national networks by offering programming which "consists of game shows and films both of which seem to be dedicated to proving the pulling power of porn." For example, one station showed the movie, Deep Throat, which was banned from Italian movie houses. Another advertized for amateur strippers and received hundreds of applications from students and housewives. The show proved to be so popular that "ther was a run on antennas needed to pick up the station's



broadcasting frequency." (Time Magazine, April 24, 1978: 50)

There is a great deal of controversy as to whether this presentation of pornography reflects positive attitudes toward sex, or whether it is a negative phenomenon. On the one hand, Milan psychiatrist, Dino Origlia concluded that all amateur nudity on T.V. represents "the frustrated women's revenge... It shows how we Italians have yet to overcome our sexual problems. This puts the clock back a century to keyhole sex." On the other hand, University of Trento sociologist Gian Paolo Fabris commented that "Sex on the tube... creates an atmosphere of harmless complicity among most repressed couples and can even stimulate desires." (Time Magazine, April 24/78: 50)

#### IX THE ISSUE OF CENSORSHIP

The issue of pornography as it relates to a dehumanizing perception of women and especially as it relates to violence against women, potentially involves the controversial question of cultural censorship. "Feminists are not eager to confront this issue; they are loathe to abandon their traditional alliance with civil libertarians especially in the current 'law and order' climate of opinion." (McCormack, 1978b: 1-2) For instance, the Northern Woman Journal remarks that "The organized women's movement has remained curiously silent on the subject of pornography." (Northern Woman Journal, October/78: 16)

The Law Reform Commission of Canada in its working paper on obscenity, argued that there are two areas which lend themselves to criminal law and censorship. One area deals with the involuntary exposure of children to obscenity. The second area concerns the exposure of children to obscenity based on the premise that children do not have the maturity to differentiate between desirable and undesirable material. (Rioux, May/78: 7). Otherwise, arguments to censor material are problematic because it must be assumed that adults are capable of avoiding what is personally unacceptable and distasteful. (Rioux, May/78: 8) However, as discussed in this paper, there is growing evidence that certain pornographic material, specifically sado-masochistic material has a correlative relationship to violence against women; it de-sensitizes people and encourages them to act in violent and aggressive ways. If this is true, it suggests that censorship may be necessary to protect women from violent acts against them.

Lorenne Clark claims that all sexually explicit material cannot be labelled pornographic merely because it brings about varying states of sexual arousal. Similarly, this material cannot be justifiably censored

because it depicts sexually arousing material. However, she claims that it is justifiable to prohibit whatever causes harm to others either directly or indirectly. "It need not be the case that the harm to which they contribute is identical to the harm depicted. It must be acknowledged that it is not 'normal' to become sexually aroused by just anything. And it must also be acknowledged that if one gets sexually aroused from things which create a clear and substantial risk to...others, then one can justifiably be prohibited from getting one's responses that way." (Clark, 1978: 4)

Clark believes that there are two reasons for adopting this position. She claims that there is historical proof that fantasy of this type does not remain fantasy, but is transformed into reality. Furthermore, if the actions themselves are not acted out, the attitudes and beliefs of "those enjoying it reflect attitudes toward the objects of the actions which...are bound to produce practical effects in real life if only to be expressed in bigotted and racist attitudes. (Clark, 1978: 4)

Just as this argument has been applied to material which depicts blacks or minority groups in degrading ways, "it can also be applied to pornography which depicts women as inferior to men and as primarily of value as an instrument for the sexual satisfaction of men." (Clark, 1978: 5)

Clark emphasizes that while many men react positively to this type of pornography, their response is a socialized, and not natural response. Once pornography's cultural roots are articulated, it will be possible to reconceptualize the concept of pornography so that men will identify the sadism and attitudes of sexual aggressivity into which they have been socialized and will thus reject them and "be angry at a social system that produced that response." (Clark, 1978: 5)

Clark recognizes the liberal principle behind opposition to censorship which is based on the belief that positive social change requires easy public access to information that challenges the beliefs and practices of the status quo. She claims that this potential benefit is negated when "information which supports the status quo through providing role models which advocate the use or threat of violence as a technique of social control directed at a clearly identifiable group depicted as inferior, subordinate and sub-human." (Clark, 1978: 6) While this has been acknowledged in the legislature in regard to violently anti-semitic and other racist material, it has yet to be acknowledged in regard to violence against women.



Proponents of censorship argue that behaviour and attitudes can be changed or controlled by suppressing pornographic material. This was the position taken by the Parliamentary Committee on Justice. In their Report on Obscenity, they argued that censorship was justified because pornography portrayed women in a degrading light.

However, these arguments for censorship are countered by equally strong arguments against censorship. For example, many fear that censorship would result in a strong underground pornography business and feelings of anti-feminism. The Conseil du Statut de la Femme in their publication, Quebecoises!: Equality and Autonomy, argue that although pornography is an extension of the power that men hold over women, "it is not recommended that censorship be tightened, for too much censorship would bring about a black market. Instead, the Government of Quebec must diffuse information of a feminist nature to counter-balance this form of sexist propaganda...". (Quebecoises!: Equality and Autonomy, : 54) Robert Fulford also argues that banning pornography would result in "the development of a huge underground industry and the further spread of criminality," and points to the situation which resulted in prohibition in the United States as proof. (Fulford, March/79: 18)

It can be argued however, that a black market in pornography has always existed and that censorship would only mean increased prices in merchandise and a slight expansion of the underground market.

Another argument is made by those who hold a principled opposition to censorship in any form. Pat Daley of Upstream comments that censorship's ultimate effect is to prohibit public discussion of important issues facing our society. (Upstream, May/78) Robert Fulford points out that censorship could have been a serious and negative effect on both serious and popular literature. Artists and craftsmen, as well as those who wished to read or see their work could suffer. (Fulford, March/79)

Wendy Lawrence, executive member of the Ontario Committee on the Status of Women, suggests that although some sort of censorship may be necessary, one must implement restrictions very carefully. She believes that pornography does not have an immediate effect which results in violence. It is very seldom that a "normal" man will read Hustler Magazine or see a movie like Clockwork Orange and react to it by raping a woman. In such circumstances, the individual is usually disturbed and there is a precipitating cause for the violence. She believes that pornography's most damaging effects are cumulative. The negative impact which pornography has on the perception of women is made worse by the lack of alternative models of women available in

society. This is true in programs presented by the mass media and especially television. Television fails to provide an adequate representation of the variety of realistic female role models available; instead, it presents only idealistic and conservative models of women as housewives and mothers, or women as the weaker sex, passive and fearful in the face of violence. Friedman agrees arguing that one of the most crucial aspects of media's effectiveness in promoting violence in general and violent sex in particular, is its refusal to show alternatives. (Friedman, 1976: 26)

In addition, Wendy Lawrence feels that there is a tendency for censorship laws to attack the work of serious artists who do not express ideal models, but instead present equally valid expressions of a moral vision that is not an ideal one. For example, the Isaacs Gallery in Toronto was charged under the Obscenity Act when it exhibited the work of artist, Mark Prent. There are, of course, some types of acts, i.e. nonconsensual sex with children, that probably cannot be presented by an artist with a non-idealistic moral function which would make it acceptable. It is this type of material that may be examined for censorship purposes.

Others argue that censorship will have little effect in changing attitudes or behaviour because society, not pornography, is at the root of the problem. For example, Thelma McCormack believes that pornography is a social phenomenon which is intimately tied to the social structure of the society which gives it birth. Therefore, the content and function of 18th century pornography is different from the content and function of 19th century pornography which differs again from the content and function of 20th century pornography because the society in which each type of pornography evolved is different. She argues that censoring modern pornography will not change the realities of violence against women nor the degradation of women, any more than censorship of 19th century pornography which, for instance, described the sexual abuse of domestics by their employers, would have prevented the very real sexual abuse of servants which occurred during that century. (McCormack, Pornography Models and Social Structure: 30)

Many feminists who are against censorship fear that censorship laws can be turned against them and used "to control lesbianism, or feminist, or radical politics." (Friedman, 1976) They feel that in the long run, women must gain access to the media through ownership of the media or through regulations which require that established media give a certain amount of time to alternate programming. Others advocate the development of "our own feminist pornography, that is, non-sexist erotica." (Friedman, 1976)



Thelma McCormack supports the picketing of pornographic movie houses and the establishment of competing feminist movie theatres, discussion and analysis of the implications of violent pornography. Fulford says that feminists "...can spread through society an awareness that some large groups of citizens find violent pornography unchic, unfunny and unacceptable... they can assert the dignity of women in the face of exploitation." (Fulford, 1979) For example, in May 1979, Communications Minister, Jeanne Sauve, announced the formation of a 12-member committee of women to monitor sexist stereotyping on television and radio. (The Conservative Government has recently dissolved this study group as unnecessary, only to later re-appoint members with a mandate to produce guidelines to eliminate sexism in broadcasting).

#### X OBSCENITY LEGISLATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Just as the obscenity laws in Canada are presently undergoing review, similarly the obscenity laws in the United States are being examined. Unlike Sweden and Italy, recommendations in both Canada and the United States call for stricter censorship measures.

The movement for the review of the obscenity laws began during the Nixon Administration. The proposed measure, Bill S-1, linked revised obscenity laws with other censorship measures, including an Official Secrets Act, and other provisions which restricted press activities.

A revised bill, S-1437, was passed by the Senate, on September 30, 1978. It was considered to be an improvement by civil libertarians although it rejected recommendations to liberalize federal anti-obscenity laws and instead took its recommendations from the earlier Bill S-1.

In hearings before the House Committee on the Judiciary Justice Subcommittee on Criminal Justice which is in the process of considering the recodification measure, groups such as the Association of American Publishers and the American Bar Association criticized various aspects of the bill.

They especially focussed on Section 1842 and related obscenity provisions claiming that "the Senate bill ignores the basic recommendations of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography that no federal legislation should be adopted which operates to criminalize the dissemination of sexually-related materials to consenting adults who wish to read or view them." (Publisher's Weekly, March 13/78: 30) Although the Obscenity Commission approved the concept of laws which regulated the dissemination of such materials to minors or unwilling adults, it recommended that such regulation

be left to state and local law as opposed to federal law. (Publisher's Weekly, March/78: 30)

It described as "unconstitutional, unenforceable, undesirable or requiring major revision the following provisions: a section which proscribes advertising for abortions and the mailing or transportation of obscene, indecent or immoral materials; the Senate's definition of the general jurisdiction over obscenity which would expand federal jurisdiction to cover local activities such as library lending, educational use and intrastate sale or distribution." (Publisher's Weekly, March/78: 31)

The Supreme Court's recent decision in regard to the "seven dirty words" case is also important in regard to the changing interpretation of obscenity laws. On July 3, 1978, a 5 Justice majority concluded that the Federal Communications Commission had acted within its authority in warning a New York radio station that the airing of comedian George Carlin's monologue "filthy words" could result in penalties.

The majority arrived at their conclusion for two basic reasons. They explained that first "the broadcast media have established a uniquely pervasive presence in the lives of all Americans. Patently offensive, indecent material presently offensive, indecent material presented over the airwaves confronts the citizen, not only in public, but also in the privacy of the home...". (Publisher's Weekly, July 17/78: 84) Second, "broadcasting is uniquely accessible to children, even those too young to read...". (Publisher's Weekly, July 17/78: 84)

Although the court emphasized the "narrowness" of its holding which they insisted rested on a nuisance rationale in which this unique context was all-important in this particular case, civil libertarians, as well as groups such as the National Association of Broadcasters, labelled the decision "a harsh blow for the freedom of expression of every person in the country." (Publisher's Weekly, July 17/78: 84) In dissenting opinions, two Justices agreed, asserting that "the visage of the censor is all too discernible." They argued that "taken to their logical extreme, these rationales would support the cleaning of public radio of any 'four-letter words' whatsoever, regardless of their context. The rationales could justify the banning from radio of a myriad of literary works, novels, poems and plays by the likes of Shakespeare, Joyce, Hemingway, Ben Jonson, Henry Fielding, Robert Burns and Chaucer; they could support the suppression of a good deal of political speech, such as the Nixon tapes; and they could even provide the basis for imposing sanctions for the broadcast of certain portions of the

Bible." (Publisher's Weekly, July 17/78: 84) As well, they also found disturbing "a depressing inability to appreciate that in our land of cultural pluralism, there are many who think, act and talk differently from the members of this court, and who do not share their fragile sensibilities. It is only an acute ethnocentric myopia that enables the court to approve censorship of communications solely because of the words they contain." (Publisher's Weekly, July 17/78: 85)

Legislative action is being taken by some of the states in the United States. For example, the Tennessee Obscenity Act which came into effect May 12, 1978, has received national attention and is said to have influenced a similar Act passed by the City of Hamilton in 1979. Six book companies including the American Booksellers Association joined as plaintiffs in a test case to challenge the constitutionality of the law. Critics claim that the statute goes far beyond an effort to restrict "hard core" pornography and would prevent legitimate publishers, librarians and so on from providing non-pornographic books of serious value to the public. For example, the Act provides that portions of a work may be found obscene even if a work as a whole is not. As well, constitutionally, material is not defined as obscene unless it depicts sexual conduct in a "patently offensive manner." The Act defines that phrase in terms of acts depicted, not in terms of their manner of depiction. In general, "the Act as a whole and its specific provisions are vague, unintelligible and unduly complex to the extent that persons of ordinary intelligence cannot determine what conduct is prohibited by it." (Publisher's Weekly, July 17/78: 81) The national co-ordinator of Media Coalition speculated that as many as 10 state legislatures are considering similar bills.

Although a lower court ruled on July 7/78 that most of the 1978 Tennessee Obscenity Act is unconstitutional, Larry Parrish who drafted the original legislation said that "the next step" will be an appeal to the State Supreme Court. He stated that the lower court's ruling would be "90% negated" by the Supreme Court's decision on the Carlin case. (Publisher's Weekly, July 17/78: 81)

In January 1978, the United States House of Representatives unanimously approved a bill which made it a federal crime to produce pornographic movies or magazines involving males and females under the age of 16. It is also illegal to transport males or females under the age of 18 across state lines for prostitution or other commercial sexual exploitation. The maximum fine is \$10,000 and 10 years in prison. (Globe and Mail, January 25, 1978) A recent article in the Globe and Mail associates the widespread child



prostitution in Vancouver with the exploitative use of children as models for pornographic purposes. (Globe and Mail, July 6/79)

Most of the pornography industry in the United States is centred in New York and California and a law report issued in British Columbia says that most of it is tied to organized crime with the Mafia as the main beneficiary. (Globe and Mail, July 21/79) The California Justice Department estimates that pornography dealers will make about \$4 billion in 1979. Author Carolyn See, in her book, Blue Money, said that although Linda Lovelace earned only \$1,200 for filming Deep Throat, she expected the picture to make \$10 million. At present, the pornography business is so well-established, pornography actors have a union which is trying to get for its members, an 8-hour day with time for lunch and coffee breaks. (Globe and Mail, July 21/79)

#### XI TRENDS IN PORNOGRAPHY IN CANADA

Conservative censorship measures are also being promoted by Canadians in municipal and provincial legislatures, as well as by the judiciary. For example, in December 1978, the city of Hamilton legislation committee unanimously recommended the institution of an anti-pornography by-law which would have required bookshops, record stores, art galleries or any business selling material "appealing to or designed to appeal to erotic or sexual appetites or inclinations" to be licensed to pay a \$100 licence fee and to put up a window sticker designating it as an adult entertainment parlour. The problem with a by-law such as this, is that since erotic means only "of or pertaining to sexual love; amatory", the by-law could result in the classification of much of the world's great literature as pornographic.

In May 1979, a revised and less stringent anti-pornography by-law was passed which stated that stores wishing to sell pornography books and magazines must buy a special license as adult entertainment parlours. As well, they must wrap sexually explicit material in plastic and place it on shelves at least 6 feet high with only the title showing. However, many lawyers feel that as in the United States, this by-law which has been challenged in the courts, will go all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada.

At a Metro Toronto Licensing and Legislation Committee meeting in March 1979, a report was released which stated that the Metro Toronto Council has the power to license and legislate shops selling pornography literature. (Globe and Mail, March 15/79)

In January 1979, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that Nova Scotia had the right to censor films. That decision overturned an earlier ruling by a lower court in 1976 against censorship which was made when a journalist tested the province's right to ban the film, The Last Tango in Paris. Since 1976, Nova Scotia has classified, but not censored, films and this has meant that many pornographic films have been sent to Nova Scotia where they have been shown in specially designated movie theatres. However, since January when the court ruling was made, police have been bringing obscenity charges against theatre operators showing hard-core pornography. As a result of the January ruling, Nova Scotia, which ranked with Manitoba and British Columbia in its tolerance of film sex and violence, is now closer in attitude to New Brunswick or Ontario which actively censors and bans films. This new ruling will also affect Newfoundland which has no film classifying agency and accepts films approved by New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Quebec is the most permissive of all of the provinces in regard to censorship. (Globe and Mail, July 5/79)

Donald Trivett, an Anglican clergyman who is the acting chairman of the Amusements Regulation Board in Nova Scotia, the body responsible for classifying films, claims that he is philosophically opposed to censorship. He believes that there should be up to four or five outlets for pornography across the province. (Globe and Mail, July 5/79).

Operators of pornography theatres in Ontario agree with this line of thought and there seems to be a new trend toward pornography theatres, as well as bars that offer women at \$20 per half hour for "dancing and conversation". For example, Joe Martin Sr. who ran 7 of Toronto's 75 body rub parlours until they were closed after the sex-related murder of 12-year old Emanuel Jacques, is opening several establishments in Toronto on the Yonge Street strip. He is converting a Yonge Fashions store at 377 Yonge Street into a pornography book and stag movie emporium. (Globe and Mail, July/79)

Business World Magazine says that 30% of all Canadian newsstand sales come from periodicals that would have been illegal 20 years ago. There are so many stores which legitimately sell soft-core pornography that the police no longer keep track of the stores that sell it. About 15 shops in Metro deal secretly in under-the-counter hard-core pornography. This includes pictures and films of sex with children and pictures or films of bestiality. Most hard-core pornography is imported from Europe and the U.S. However, there is evidence that some of the material is made here. For example, recently, "the porn squad raided a printing company in Scarborough that allegedly printed 104,000 hard core books after the U.S. publisher was unable

to get its editions across the border." (Globe and Mail, July 21, 1979)

Peter Peteruzzellis of Project P, Ontario's anti-smut squad, composed of a joint four-man squad of Metro and Provincial Police, says that today, "the big thing now is video-tape cassettes of dirty movies that you can play on a T.V. screen." Some electronic shops in Toronto who deal in hard-core under-the-counter pornography, will rent a hard-core cassette movie to a trusted customer for \$20 or sell a T.V. copy of Deep Throat for about \$100. (Globe and Mail, July 21, 1979)

Police at Project P say that there is no direct evidence that the Mafia has direct links with legitimate soft-core pornography dealers in Ontario. "In Canada pornography is a high-profit low-risk business." (Globe and Mail, July 21/79). Nevertheless, they believe that "the whole porn business in Canada is worth about \$300 million annually." (Globe and Mail, July 21/79)

Canada's major soft-core pornography magazine, Elite, sells about 180,000 copies per issue in Canada at \$2.25 each, as well as 195,000 issues outside of Canada. Publisher David Wells claims that Elite outsells Toronto Life, Saturday Night and Macleans combined on the newsstand. Ed McKin of the Periodicals Distributors of Canada told reporters that "Canadian retail sales of 'sophisticated adult' magazines are \$17.5 million a year, not counting illegal sales of hard core books." (Globe and Mail, July 27/79)

## XII SUMMARY

### i) Pornography and Violence

In conclusion, there seems to be little evidence of a direct causal relationship between sado-masochistic or violent pornography and violence itself. However, there does seem to be a growing belief that there is a definite correlation between the two. It appears likely that the effects of pornography may not always be immediate or instantaneous, but can develop subtly and be cumulative over time. That is, an indirect link can be established between violent pornography on the one hand and the societal values and treatment of women on the other hand.

Studies also indicate that the presentation of violence in pornography does encourage a casual attitude toward violence in general, and violence against women specifically. However, it is important to understand that violent pornography is only a small part of a larger problem which includes the failure of the media to present alternative and positive models of women and social reality.



It also seems probable that violent pornography is not only negatively affecting the way in which men see women, but is also affecting the way in which women see themselves. Violent pornography exploits and dehumanizes women; it portrays them as mindless and passive zombies and as a result of cultural conditioning and pressures women as well as men are buying these images.

ii) Censorship

Censorship is not a new phenomenon. For example, blatantly racist material is censored because it is perceived to infringe upon the rights of minority groups in a detrimental and unacceptable way. Consequently, many feminists believe that the censorship of violent pornography, like the censorship of racism, is justifiable because it affects people and especially women in a negative way.

Although censorship may be necessary, there is a wide variety of opinion with regard to what material should be censored and how broadly or loosely censorship provisions should be framed. There is a tendency for legislation to be so broad and all-encompassing that it evokes images of massive censorship and repression among academics and book publishers who tend to see most forms of censorship as an infringement on their civil liberties.

Many academics and feminists question how effective censorship is in regard to preventing sado-masochistic pornography. Some feminists argue that censorship would not prevent sado-masochistic pornography because violent pornography is a reflection of social reality. Only when those aspects of society that are reflected in pornography change will the images in pornography change. Other feminists believe that violent pornography establishes social norms in society which promote a casual attitude toward violence and encourages the "dehumanization" of women. Consequently, they believe that censorship is valid.

Although it may be true that pornography is a reflection of social reality and that censorship of pornography will not change that social reality, it also seems to be possible that pornography actively promotes and encourages the development of social norms within society. If this is true, censorship is one way of demarcating the boundaries of acceptable or unacceptable social values and attitudes.

This is not to suggest that censorship is the best method of combating pornography, nor is it to suggest that it should be applied flagrantly. Rather, it indicates that censorship can be a valid form of discouraging inappropriate attitudes and actions toward women. However, censorship laws should be

specific, as opposed to broad and all-encompassing, and every attempt should be made to protect from censorship erotic or non-sexist comments on society made in art, literature, film and so on. Unquestionably, other methods, for example, picketing pornography movie houses, establishing feminist movie theatres and so on, are more desirable than censorship, although perhaps less effective, unless strong leadership and support for this approach is provided by a united feminist front and/or by government funding and legislated guidelines.

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